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Reply to Office Action of July 9, 2004

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**REMARKS**

In the Office Action of May 27, 2004, Examiner rejected claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,064,377 to Regan ("Regan"). Applicant herein amends independent claims 1 and 14 and traverses the rejection as follows.

Generally, the claims of the subject application are directed to a tie line adapter for use with a first and second communication system. In an embodiment, Applicant's system may be used to connect different communication systems and allow communication between such communication systems having different tie line characteristics. One feature of the embodiment provides that where the adapter is connected to a second tie line, its impedance may be adjusted to one of a plurality of pre-configured values. As such, the embodiment provides an adapter with variable impedance that may be connected to different communication systems, where each system has a different tie line impedance. Specifically, amended claim 1 defines a tie line adapter having a controller for selectively adjusting an impedance of the tie line adapter to one of a plurality of pre-configured impedance levels. No new subject matter is added by the amendment. Exemplary support for amended claim 1 is found at Figure 2 and at paragraphs [0026] and [0031] of the specification.

Conversely, Regan utilizes a single pre-selected impedance that is fixedly installed in a hybrid to provide a set impedance match with the equipment that is expected to be coupled to the hybrid. See for example, impedances 30 and 31 of Figures 1 and 2, terminating impedance 104 and 105 of Figure 3a, impedances 135 and 136 of Figure 3c, and column 3, line 67 through column 4, line 1 of Regan. As such, Regan provides a *static* impedance match for connections

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between two sets of communication lines. Regan does not teach or suggest the feature of providing a variable impedance at a connection of its hybrid to a line that may be adjusted to one of a plurality of pre-configured impedance values so that the impedance may be adjusted as appropriate for connection to different communication systems, as defined in amended claim 1. As such, claim 1 as amended is patentable over Regan.

In amended claim 14, a method for controlling a signal characteristic of a signal transmitted from a first communication system to a second communication system through an adapter is defined. Like amended claim 1, the method includes the feature of selecting an impedance at a connection to a tie line from a plurality of pre-configured impedance values, which feature is not taught or suggested by Regan as described above. As such, claim 14 is likewise patentable over Regan. No new subject matter is added by the amendment. Exemplary support for amended claim 14 is found at Figure 2 and at paragraphs [0026] and [0031] of the specification.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 14, as amended, are patentable over Regan. Remaining claims 2-3 and 5-6, and newly added claims 19-37, each depend directly or indirectly from either claim 1 or claim 14. Applicant therefore submits that such dependent claims are likewise patentable over Regan. Exemplary support for new claims 19-37 may be found in Figures 2 and 6, and in paragraphs [0020] to [0028] and [0033] to [0035].

No new subject matter is provided with the present amendments. In view of the present amendments, Applicant submits that the claims as provided herein are in condition for allowance. Applicant earnestly solicits that this application be permitted to proceed to

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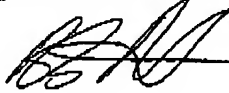
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allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to discuss this case further, if necessary.

Respectfully submitted



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